

THE FOOD QUEST

43

224 snakes are all pursued with eagerness. If any kind of food
262 is debarred it is more often because of some magico-religious
tabu than through a feeling of aversion.

224 *Individual Hunting.* When an individual travels in the bush
he goes armed with his spear and followed by his dog so as
to lose no opportunities. As the floods are subsiding the
villagers will prowls about, a man and his wife together, with
a fair certainty of bagging some small game which has been
driven out of its shelter; and if they can do no better the
woman will, at least, succeed in catching frogs.

If his dog puts up a bush-pig a man will not hesitate to
attack it single-handed. He will even do so in the perilous
uncertainty of the moonlight. The strength and fierceness
of the bush-boar, with his tusks ground to continual sharp-
ness, make him no mean enemy, and argue considerable
pluck on the part of the individual hunter. Even concerted
hunts are not without danger. An old man named Tumai
relates how, during a pig-drive (while the river Opi was in
flood and the pigs more or less cut off), he speared one of
these animals as it rushed into the net. The spear broke and
the pig, disengaging itself from the net, 'looked about as if
to say, who speared me?' Concluding rightly that it was
Tumai it turned upon him, ripped first one thigh, then the
other, then his chest, then his knee. (The scars remain on
the old man's body as proud evidence of his adventure.) It
was at this stage that his son came to the rescue, only to be
bowled over in his turn. But now Tumai, despite his four
wounds, threw himself bodily upon the pig, and the son was
enabled to get to his feet and kill it. Such incidents are
common enough. There is no denying that the bush-pig is
a formidable beast and the Orokaiva a fearless hunter.

Concerted Hunting. There are two principal methods of
concerted hunting. One is the drive through the bush to-
wards a pig-net; the other is that of the grass-burning.

[286] The pig-net (*wonga*) is strongly made of pandanus fibre.
224 The mesh is about four inches wide; the net stands about
773 four feet high; and each section may be twenty yards long.
It is propped up by a series of stakes (*tetere*). Formerly these
stakes were the only means of holding up the net, and it was

THE FOOD QUEST

224 frequently charged down by the pig. But once while the
 713 hunters were sheltering from the rain a small boy found
 himself cowering in a hollow tree. He was startled by a cry
 of *Dave bang, dave bang!* from above his head in the interior
 of the tree. He ran out terrified and told the men, who pro-
 ceeded to cut out part of the hollow trunk. As they were
 doing so a *sovai* or monster came tumbling down and glared
 round on the hunters. Some were brave enough to threaten
 him, but he told them to restrain themselves as he was about
 to make them a present. With that he dragged down inter-
 minable lengths of rope from the interior of the tree, and
 passing them through the meshes of the pig-net above and
 below, made them fast at either end to strong stakes. The
 rope is called *dave* and the stakes *bang*, and since that time
 both have been used with satisfactory result. A similar but
 124 lighter net is used for wallabies. With either the method of
 procedure is the same. Beaters (*dogo*) advance with loud
 halloos, and the pig fleeing before them charges into the
 net, where he is speared by the *monga-embo*, or netsmen. A
 number of privately-owned nets are stretched end to end,
 and the quarry belongs to the owner of that particular net
 in which it is caught.

Annually towards the end of the South-East season the
 tracts of grass-land are burnt off. The weather is hot and
 dry and the grass burns furiously, only to spring up after-
 wards with renewed vigour. The grass tracts are owned by
 individual clans, but at this season there will assemble large
 hunting parties composed of many clans and villages.

At one hunt which I attended there were some sixty
 people, including a number of women. They assembled
 from various quarters at one village and left for the scene
 of the hunt, at about 9 a.m., so as to commence operations
 in the heat of noon. After a walk of about seven miles they
 rested in a small village and arranged their campaign. Four
 firing-parties split off and made their way as quietly as
 possible to four positions on the edge of the selected grass
 patch. The remainder distributed themselves around the
 patch. The men of the firing-parties work in pairs. One
 goes in front and, holding his spear horizontally, thus

ARTS OF LIFE

71

except for certain large trees which are said to have supported them in less reposeful days. They were not fighting-tops so much as places of refuge in which a surprised village might keep its assailants at bay until the blasts of the wooden trumpets brought help from surrounding allies. They were built in the branches of large trees in or near the village (sometimes in several adjacent trees connected with cane gangways), and were furnished with cane-ladders or 'legs' (*sawai-tai*). The stockade provided another means of defence, though this too has disappeared with the coming of the King's peace.

A method of dwelling which I believe to be unique in Papua is described by Beaver, and, though he had not the witness of his eyes, it appears that he was dealing with a reliable informant.

'I had many times heard', he writes, 'that the Dogi people used to live on rafts moored round the lake, and had been inclined to look upon the story as rather of the traveller's tale variety, but I found that it was actually the case. They used to live on the shore, but, owing to successive raids by the Iawabuie and Binandele, the Dogi built huge rafts—the water was too deep to sink piles—and constructed their houses on these refuges. Ninei, the present village constable, a man about 40, was born on one of these floating arks, and he tells me the people were living on them when first visited by Mr. M. M. Clark.'

It was probably about 1895 that Mr. Clark was prospecting in this neighbourhood, and the lake referred to is presumably Lake Koena. I did not visit the locality myself and can only verify the legend of the eel and the flood which Beaver tells in connexion with the origin of the lake. I found this legend, however, coupled with the adventures of two surviving children rescued by a woman named Bobokoia, who was of great size, like an island, with sago palms growing on her back. The children lived on this floating island or woman until finally they settled on shore again. It seems hardly credible that the story of the raft-dwellings should have turned into that of Bobokoia within the time, though the likeness seems suspicious. It is not improbable that the raft dwellings were of no more than a temporary nature, and that the legend dates back much earlier.

166 parrot, some having it that the parrot was owned by an
173 Aiga man and killed by a Binandele boy, others that the
619 parrot was owned by a Binandele man and bitten by an Aiga
dog.

It is certain, however, that a previous Binandele population were driven out by the Aiga, some of the fugitives settling on the lower Kumusi, others on the Mambare.

Subsequent quarrels among the Aiga, with constant repetition of the inter-clan fighting called *embogi*, finally led some of the Aiga to migrate northwards and rejoin the Binandele. It is said that these refugees in their anxiety to escape killed the old folk who impeded their progress and left them behind decorated with feathers but unburied. But a milder version of the same incident relates that one of the refugees taking his wife with him was so embarrassed by the clamorous grief of his *imboti*, or mother-in-law, that he silenced it by striking her dead with his club. There are now some Aiga clans represented among the Binandele, as there are also Aiga clans represented among the Hunjovarehu. And if any value can be attached to names, it would appear from cases in which they correspond that some of the clans are widely scattered among other tribes.

Legends of Origin and Dispersal of Tribes

I must confess to having no settled theory as to the movements of the tribes at large. There has evidently been a northward drift in comparatively recent times affecting the Aiga, the Binandele, and other peoples referred to by Chinery and Beaver; but without reliable information (which I cannot supply) as to the movements of the other tribes, it is impossible to say whether this northward trend has been general.

● 773 Several legends (with many variations) are current as to the origin of the Orokaiva. In the south it is said that all the peoples issued from a hole in the ground or a cave situated somewhere in the Hydrographers, and that the first to emerge were the Orokaiva, who brought the taro with them, and left the yam and sweet potato for the mountaineers.

THE TRIBES

155

But the other stories point rather to a northern provenance. One of the best known of Orokaiva legends concerns a man-monster named Totoima who was in the habit of slaying all whom he met. His sister (or wife), however, while at work in her garden cut her finger on a leaf of sugarcane and caught the blood in a leaf of taro. Wrapping this up she hid it away in a pot where it was transformed into two children, or, as other versions say, a great number of boys and girls. These children grew up, and with the assistance of their 'mother' managed to dispatch the tyrannical Totoima; after which they waxed in numbers and became the present Orokaiva people. It is only in some versions of the story, however, that these miraculous children born in the pot are made the nucleus of the Orokaiva. The legend necessarily presupposes a previous population on which Totoima could practise his persecutions, and in the more usual version the remnant of these people come flocking in from their hiding-places to devour various parts of the monster's body, and in consequence acquire the several dialects of the Orokaiva tongue. As for any light which this legend might throw on the provenance of the people, it may be said that, although the knowledge of the tale is as widespread as the actual depredations of Totoima are supposed to have been, it is associated especially with the river Gira, where the scenes of the monster's dramatic downfall are pointed out.

Another legend, associated with the Gira or the Waria (though more commonly with the latter), tells of a thickly populated inland water. Two youths, usually called Garia¹ and Simono, build a canoe on this lake in a miraculously easy manner, and then make an outlet by which the water flows to the sea in the form of a river—either the Waria or the Gira according to the rendering of the tale. Garia and Simono proceed down the river on their canoe, followed by a number of people who subsequently spread over the plain, as Orokaiva. In another version, which differs rather widely from the above, the canoe is made by one Korevaja who, while travelling on it, pleads with his friends to hit him on

¹ Probably the same word as Waria.

THE TRIBES

173

the head with a stone club and throw him overboard. At last one of them consents reluctantly to do this, and Korevaja topples overboard and sinks. As he does so innumerable bubbles rise and turn into human beings who disperse themselves as the Orokaiva tribes.

In the fourth of these legends, a woman Buda lives alone with her husband Menina on the Waria river. Over their house grows a tall *Bendoro* tree, and every morning the woman must take her broom and sweep up a litter of fallen leaves. But she complains of the loneliness of their life, and one day at her work she wishes that men and women were as numerous as the *Bendoro* leaves. Next morning when she and her husband come out of their house they find no leaves but myriads of people. The woman Buda forthwith classifies these into the various tribes, presents them with weapons and implements of Orokaiva material culture, and sending them off to their respective regions, from Kokoda down to the salt water, bids them fight and wage war on one another, and make truces when they tire of fighting—instructions which they have carried out with much fidelity.

Individuality of the Tribe

619

These legends are as much concerned with the division of the Orokaiva into tribes as with their origin. The actual division into tribes is probably due in the first instance to kinship and clan grouping; but this is reinforced by local grouping, and eventually the local group, owing to the vagaries of settlement and migration, is found to comprise a variety of clan groups. Relative isolation serves to consolidate the tribe, to create a few idiosyncrasies of custom, and to give it a distinct dialect. But what more than anything else gives individuality to the tribe is the almost perpetual state of war with its neighbours. The tribe, therefore, is defined by (1) a common territory, (2) certain idiosyncrasies of custom; (3) a distinct dialect, and (4) its common enmities.

(1) It will not be necessary to deal at any length with the subject of tribal territory. The boundaries on the map are rough and ready. It will be seen that the distribution differs

THE TRIBES

619 the *buave*, a breast ornament of two circles of white shell.
 184 When Totoima's sister split up the people into tribes she
 301 allotted them various distinctive ornaments. To the Sauaha
 she gave the black feathers of the hornbill; to the Sangara
 the red feathers of *Ungaiavo*, *Orero*, and *Samba*; to the Aiga
 red-dyed betel spathe, *saima* (or small white cowrie) shells,
 and dog's teeth; and to the Yega the *tava* or palm-wood
 digging stick. The legend, of course, merely indicates that
 the men of these tribes show a modern preference for the
 articles named.

• 173 But these fashions are by no means exclusive, and perhaps
 829 the distinctions are little more real than those peculiarities
 619 of temper which are said to have come into being when the
 various peoples feasted on Totoima's body. In a version of
 the story given by an old Yema man the participants in the
 feast were mostly Waria people: the Bia and Mawai had
 eaten his legs, and were consequently speedy runners; the
 Yema themselves had eaten his entrails, and were therefore
 subject to stomachic disturbances which were the direct
 cause of a fierce temper; the Ono (?) had eaten his genitalia,
 and were highly erotic; the Jia had eaten froth or saliva, and
 therefore their language was unintelligible; the Gilita (who
 formerly occupied the present Binandele territory) had
 eaten his spleen, and were sullen men who used their spears
 more readily than their tongues; and the Berepo (i.e. the
 Aiga and other bush people of the Orokaiva) had eaten his
 head and mouth, and were therefore 'strong talkers',
 quarrelsome and abusive.¹

173 (3) The eating of Totoima's body is generally made to
 619 account for nothing more than differences of dialect. There
 is a remarkable insistence in many renderings of the story
 upon the bubbles (*boro*), i.e. of froth, saliva, or grease, which
 in a manner not easily understood arose from the monster's
 body before or during cooking. In one version the refugees
 came flocking in when they heard of Totoima's death, and
 when they found him roasting or basting on the hot stones
 they fell to and lapped up the bubbles of scalding grease.

¹ In Wasida the story of Totoima is told of one Kokowaike. *Vide* Chinnery and
 Beaver, *loc. cit.*, p. 161.

THE TRIBES

119 113
619

After that, as one might almost expect, they began to speak in different tongues.

The tribal vocabularies have been compared by Chinnery and Beaver.¹ They have been commonly called varieties of Binandele, not because Binandele is known to be the original or nearer to an original than any of the others, but because it has been more closely studied. The Rev. Copland King put together a vocabulary of this dialect which was published in 1901,² and it has since been mastered by members of the Anglican Mission. The dialects are mutually intelligible to the natives, though not always without difficulty. To a European they sound very different, and a knowledge of one does not imply a speaking knowledge of another.

Natives have their own way of classifying the tribes (or some of them) according to dialect. There is a word *midia*, which means 'There you are!' or *vailà!*; and natives will refer to the Wasida tribe as *Mitia* people, the Sangara and Sauaha tribes as *Mibia* people, the Hunjara tribe as *Mibja* people, and the Aiga as *Midia* people. (Binandele and Yega people apparently do not use the word.)

The Hunjara tribe is very commonly called *Aba-maba*, from their distinctive manner of pronouncing the words for 'mother' and 'father', which the other tribes find somewhat amusing. An informant will go on to explain that the Binandele are *Aiaba-mamaba*, the Aiga *Aja-mama*, the Yega *Aia-mama*, and the Sauaha and Sangara *ajaba-mamaba*. (The Wasida use the word *enau* for 'mother'.)

Somewhat remarkable is the fact that at least four different words are used to name the ghost (or the spirit of the dead, or, again, the supernatural monster, which comes under the same category). Among the Aiga the word is *sovai*; among the Binandele and Yega *binei*; and among the Hunjara *siango*. The other tribes appear to use either *siango* or *embabi*. I do not know that there are any distinctive differences between the ideas of the several tribes on this point,

¹ *Lac. cit.*, pp. 162 ff.

² *Vocabulary of the Binandele Dialect, spoken by the Natives of the Mamba River, British New Guinea* (D. S. Ford, Sydney, 1901). New Edit., 1927.

DANCE AND DRAMA

241

describe. It was performed at Christmas, 1923, on the Buna Bay station, by a party of Jeva Buje natives from the Kumusi. 536

The play is based upon the following legend or legendary incident, which was recounted to me shortly after by some of the players themselves: 536
773

A large *Boru* tree had fallen into the river (informants suggested the river Waria), and in the dark pool beneath this tree there sheltered a *dera*, or sword-fish. Now two girls came down the river fishing with a line, the younger taking charge of the fish as the elder caught them. When they came to the *Boru* tree and cast their line into the dark pool beneath it, the bait was seized by the *dera*. The united efforts of the girls failed to land so large a creature, and the line ran hot through their hands.¹ So they made it fast to a tree-trunk, and ran back to the village for help. On the way they were met by two youths who had followed them with the express intention of *kigi*, i.e. clandestine courtship. But the girls are too excited to dally with these young men. They tell them to wait till they call their father from the village, when all will go down to the river together and kill the *dera*. This all happens as they desire. The *dera* is dragged from the water, tied to a pole, and carried to the village where (to give a good ending to the story) it is cut up and eaten.

This simple and somewhat pointless story forms the plot of the drama which I now proceed to describe. 536

The scene of the performance was the parade ground, towards one end of which there had been set up during the night a small, roughly constructed shelter of palm leaves, about four feet high and six feet square, and with one side (that facing down the parade ground) left open; this shelter represented the *Boru* tree hanging over the water.

On the sea beach, perhaps a hundred yards away, and thus quite out of sight of the spectators, there was another piece of stage furniture. Under the shelter of a canoe, and completely covered with mats, lay a representation of a

¹ The only Orokaiva methods of line fishing of which I know (see p. 57) seem hardly in keeping with the details of this story. It has probably derived something from modern methods.

DANCE AND DRAMA

247

Bigaba, who, whatever his feelings, wore an imperturbable countenance, stepped aside, but Kove met the situation by swinging a terrific blow at him with the long digging-stick he was carrying. The pole missed the old man's head by inches and met the ground with such force as to be shattered to pieces. After this improvisation, which earned him a parting roar of laughter, the clown went off, alternately shambling and bounding, to change his costume in the bush.

The following brief abstracts will help to give a general idea of the drama. I have actually seen only Nos. 7 and 8; the others were described to me.¹ It may be noted that there are two kinds of actors, the *buvivi*, whose parts are attractive, and the *sawima*, whose parts are at once comical and ugly.

No. 1. 'Totoima.'

Totoima was a man-monster who, in the early days, used to slaughter the Orokaiva. He was armed with tusks which, at the end of his day's work of killing, he would take out and sharpen. He was invincible until one day two youths secured these tusks which he had left aside while he bathed in the river. The youths had previously prepared a pig-trap, *bage* (see p. 48), and now pursued by Totoima, who is anxious to regain his teeth, they lead him on to the *bage* and throw them into it. Totoima blunders in after them and is caught. In the drama a pig-trap is erected in the village. Totoima (*sawima*) appears holding in his mouth the common two-tusk ornament (see p. 39). The boys obtain this from him and after a long pursuit throw it into the pig-trap, which collapses upon Totoima as soon as he enters it.

No. 2. 'Orehaha and the Drum.'

The Orokaiva did not know of the drum and *bui* (see pp. 86, 88) until they obtained them from Orehaha, the carpet snake. Orehaha used to beat the drum and blow the *bui* and, when the people came to discover the cause of the noise, would retire out of sight. This went on until they set a small boy to spy. He revealed the whereabouts of Orehaha,

¹ Another thoroughly typical example will be found in *Annual Report*, 1914-15, p. 14.

DANCE AND DRAMA

536
113 whom the villagers came and killed thus obtaining the drum and *bui*. I have not the particulars of stage appointments, &c.

No. 3. 'The Snake in the Ants' Nest.'

A snake-man lived in an ants' nest (*siribo*) on a tree which leaned over a creek. A man and two girls come to bale out the water in order to fish, and as they work the snake puts out his head (made of cane and bark-cloth), and sways back and forth above them. Suddenly the man looks up and takes to his heels in a fright, shouting to the girls to follow. But the snake puts aside his skin and becomes a fine man. He overtakes the girls, and leads them into his *siribo* house.

No. 4. 'Cuscus Hunting.'

536 A woman goes to the garden accompanied by her dog. They come to a tree with a hole in it, at which the dog whines and scratches. Introducing a stick into the hole the woman prods, and from the noises which ensue concludes that she has found a cuscus. Now she goes to bring her husband, who appears as a *samuna*. The woman recommends obtaining further help, but the husband declares he is strong enough, and prods again and again. Finally a second *samuna* appears, who quarrels and fights with the first. Young men and maidens (*buvivi*) come from the village, but the cuscus is not caught until the dog finally drags him out by the tail. Then there is a pursuit, and it is finally killed by the *samuna*.

The parts of the dog and the cuscus are taken by small boys blackened with charcoal.

No. 5. 'The Girl in the Tree.'

A girl (*buvivi*) is found in a tree by a youth (*buvivi*). He brings his friends (*buvivi*) and one of them climbs the tree and brings the girl down. Now all desire to possess her, and there is a scuffle in which a *samuna*, who has appeared in the meantime, joins heartily, finding ample scope for his favourite methods. It appears that the drama ends when one of the *buvivi* secures the girl and the *samuna* is left lamenting.

775 some of these disappearances come under suspicion of fake, some men pretending to have been in association with the *sovai* for the purposes of sorcery or magic, and one case that came to my notice seemed like deliberate kidnap and holding to ransom. But such examples of trickery are merely taking advantage of the popular belief that the bush is peopled by malignant creatures or fiends known as *sovai*, who are always liable to seize and carry off the lonely wanderer.

775 It is at this stage that we may briefly consider certain
773 beings who belong mainly to Orokaiva legends, but who, nevertheless, continue to have a vague existence in popular imagination. The legends (*bibi*; Binandele *kiki*) are full of characters known as *sovai*. These are commonly anthropomorphic, and although their dispositions vary, they are more often than not ridiculous or hateful. The Orokaiva, who possess a fine body of legends and fables, are quite alive to the difference between fact and fiction, or between their real beliefs and their fanciful stories, so that while one may quote a legend as illustrating any particular conception, it is, of course, not possible to assume that the legends always embody true belief. When, therefore, a native retells the tale of a well-known legendary character—Korevaja, Hovepakutota, Egovagova, to mention a few such—he does not necessarily believe that such a character ever existed except in fiction, much less that it is still in existence. In accordance with their general attributes he classifies these as *sovai*, and dismisses the matter from his mind.

Yet, despite this general attitude, we come upon sporadic instances in which these legendary *sovai* are spoken of as still existing. The instances that have come to my notice are so few that I will, as briefly as possible, set them all down.

(1) Totoima was the man-monster who formerly decimated the Orokaiva and remained invincible until two youths obtained possession of his detachable tusks, and thus having him at their mercy killed him. He is commonly regarded as no more than legendary, or as an historical being who passed out of existence when the two youths killed him. Yet a man of the River Gira (with which Totoima is specially associated) assured me that it was the custom for

SURVIVAL AFTER DEATH

277

a warlike party to call upon Totoima (as a mighty slayer) to precede them, and fall upon their foes in spirit (*asisi*), after which they would go and deliver their own attack in the flesh. 775
773

(2) Jappi Jappi Tururu is the subject of a long tale in which, although an old hag of particularly odious habits, she figures as an invariably successful huntress. A pig-hunting magician who is possessed of certain medicines and who receives visits from the *asisi* of bush-pigs, is in the habit of calling on Jappi in terms which may be translated as follows: 'O Jappi, I go forth into the bush to spear a pig; grant me a pig and make it come near me; I go now in search of one, and having found it I will soon return.' The man who originated this ritual gave it out that Jappi once conducted his spirit into the bush where she gave him the pig medicine, and instructed him how to proceed.

(3) Moraralau was accredited with the origin of the taro. He lived alone, and was eyeless, earless, noseless—in fact devoid of any bodily orifice or member—until visited by a woman who obtained the taro from him and at the same time made a man of him. After this Moraralau fled to a cave where he baffled every attempt at capture. My informants said that his *asisi* still dwelt in the cave. When a man plants taro he may ejaculate 'Moraralau!' (though it was not stated that this was an appeal to him to make the plant grow).

(4) Kokowaio is identified with the 'floating island' on lake Embi, i.e. with the cohering mass of water plants which is sometimes to be seen floating on the surface of the lake. The legend is, that Kokowaio (sometimes represented as female, sometimes as male) rescued, by taking on to her back, a boy and girl, the sole survivors of a flood which led to the formation of lake Embi. Now Kokowaio exercises some sort of control over the lake, which is generally regarded as a place full of danger, except for men of the Umondaha clan, to which it belongs. When, in company with Mr. Ashton, the Assistant Resident Magistrate of the district, I voyaged across the waters to visit the floating island on an extempore raft, our escort was apprehensive of the wind

SURVIVAL AFTER DEATH

775 which Kokowaio might send if he were displeased, and
773 continually hailed him with assurances that our intentions
were harmless, as if to ask for consideration. Mr. Wurth,
the Resident Magistrate, had a similar experience, and his
attendant explained that 'he was telling the waters of Embi
not to be wild as he was only taking his master to see the
island. . . . Had he not done so the canoe would have
capsized'.¹ It remains very uncertain what form Kokowaio
takes in native imagination beyond his association with the
floating island.

775 Mr. Leo Flint, who in the course of magisterial work has
given a good deal of study to the Orokaiva, names several
of these personal *sovai*. He writes:

'The Bines, who are alleged to have the greatest powers are—Koi,
who informs the people of the name of the necromancer who caused
the death of a certain person; the Umbubuka, who walks the road at
night; the Owadegoari, who controls the spirit of children who die in
infancy. Owadegoari is credited with having a tail, and lives in the
sago swamp. The legend of the tail is that it has grown from the
umbilical cord of infants who have died shortly after birth, or in the
uterus.'²

I have met with only the last mentioned in my own in-
quiries, and the version which I received being some-
what different, is worth recording. *Hovatu-koiari* (to use
the Aiga form) does not stand in this version for a single
personal *sovai* who controls the spirits of children dying in
infancy, but for the spirits of the children themselves. The
word means literally 'after birth (*bovatu*)—bury (*koiari*)', and
the spirit of the still-born or aborted child survives as a
little creature inhabiting the sago swamp. It is a foot or so
high, and has a long tail which, as Mr. Flint was told,
originates from the navel string. When the *bovatu-koiari*
walk the tail drags behind, but when the little creatures sit
down to scrape sago it is thrown over the shoulder and
hangs in front. They are to be seen and heard occasionally
singing a plaintive song in time to the beat of their sago-
scrapers. 'Why did our mothers throw us away?', they say.

¹ *Annual Report*, 1922-3, p. 25.

² *Ibid.*, 1920-1, p. 49.

SURVIVAL AFTER DEATH

283

in a dream and bequeathed him some instructions or a tangible 'medicine'. Sometimes the healer is in like manner indebted for his gift to a benevolent *sovai*; or the hunting magician may receive from a *sovai* the intelligence that a pig is waiting to be caught. 175 187

But apart from the favours which the *sovai* are supposed to bestow on specialists, we find that every gardener and hunter feels that the dead may send him success. It is true that the negative side of this proposition is more often in evidence, i.e. he is more prone to attribute failure to the displeasure of the *sovai* than success to their favour, but there is, nevertheless, the belief that they are able to make the gardens flourish and to drive the pigs into the pig-nets, and this is proved by the custom of adjuring the *sovai* to do so in the farewell address at the grave. 175

Even in the legends, where the *sovai* usually plays a very villainous part, we occasionally meet with one that is grateful or well disposed to the living. There is, for example, the case of the grateful warrior whose younger brother cared for his children after he had been killed, and who subsequently, in the form of a bird, warned this younger brother of an approaching raid. Nor did his gratitude stop at this, for abandoning his bird-shape he assumed that of a warrior, and held a large number of raiders at bay while his younger brother ran for help. 175 113

But such benevolent conduct on the part of the *sovai* is to say the least unusual, and it must be confessed that on the whole the Orokaiva regards his relatives and friends after their death as enemies. Any failure of the crops may be attributed to them; they may baffle the hunters; they may send the pigs to break through the fences and despoil the gardens. Sickness is perhaps ascribed more often to the malevolence of *sovai* than to any other cause. It is sometimes believed that the *sovai* enter the body in immaterial form, and sometimes that they may cause disease by a mere evil influence, e.g. by touching food. If they are eaten in their animal form sickness invariably follows. We have seen that they have more direct ways of wreaking their ill feelings, and in the guise of monsters they pursue, capture, 175 [153]

118 GARDEN CULTURE OF THE OROKAIVA

252 that a plate of firm morsels, the size of potatoes, impregnated with the juices of savory leaves and set off with a few scraps of fish or dried iguana, presents at least a sufficiently attractive *tout ensemble*.

244 The relative distributions of the taro and the yam are interesting. Whereas among the mountain people of the Hydrographers and the Koiaris of the Central Range the yam is probably the mainstay of existence, its place is taken by the taro among the Orokaiva plainsmen. In the piedmont country of Sangara, Isivita, and Hunjara the yam is grown extensively side by side with the taro, and the same is true among the tribes immediately north of the Hydrographers and Lamington foot-hills. By the time one has gone north as far as the Aiga people of the middle Opi, however, the yam-houses are no longer seen in the villages, and the yam has become a product of minor importance; and it continues so throughout the north of the Division. There is no reason, as far as I know, why the yam should not flourish on the plains, and the distribution presumably is not climatic but cultural.

773 So it might appear from a well-known story of the Orokaiva. In the hills to the southward there was a hole in the rocks, first discovered, according to one version of the legend, by the pecking of birds. Out of this hole, once opened, there issued a number of men bringing with them certain habits and possessions which they have distinctively retained. The first to emerge were the Orokaiva, who brought up the taro besides the other garden products—bananas, sugar-cane, and so forth. After them came the Kaume, or Managalasi, who wore numerous long pigtails, bound with bark. But as their forerunners had appropriated all the taro, they had to be content, for the main support of their existence, with yams.

This is merely the northern version of the legend. On its own ground, namely the southern slopes of the Hydrographers, it is told with greater detail, and they will even show the identical hole, I believe, somewhere on the Bariji river. It is said to be deep like a well, and

GARDEN PRODUCTS

119

some folk still live down there who have never succeeded in reaching the earth's surface. If you fling a stone down they will call up from below in protest, and sometimes it is said you may even hear the crowing of subterranean roosters, which proves beyond doubt the presence of human beings.

Another tale—on which one might place a convenient construction—was told among the Aiga. A man named Gause came out of a hole in the ground and built himself a house where he lived alone. But he had a drum and a *bui*, or trumpet, and would be continually beating the drum, blowing the trumpet, and singing to himself. The surrounding people from curiosity went to see him, and as they found his music an annoyance, burnt his house, and killed him. Then they broke his bones and cut his body in pieces, and the women cooked him in their pots. But Gause boiled quite away, and instead of good toothsome junks of meat they found to their disgust only soup and bubbles. Despite this treatment the spirit of Gause survived and, in some manner reincarnated, built his house anew and recommenced his noxious singing and drum-beating. Once again despoiled, dismembered, and boiled by his neighbours, the contrary Gause fell away to a mawkish liquid. Thus several times they killed their resurrected victim and dealt with his body in the customary manner of cannibals, but always with the same disappointing result; until at last they made him fast to a long rattan and lowered him into the deep crocodile-haunted water of the creek Elaga that finds the Opi, saying, 'Maybe he will turn into a crocodile, maybe not; anyhow we will let him down.' And the crocodiles came and tore him to bits under the water, and that made a real end of him, so that the annoyance of his drum-beating and trumpet-blowing ceased at last.

In most of these fables the hero plays a thoroughly human part, and in this one Gause is a man. But, as my informants volunteered, quite innocent of the connexion which may or may not exist, Gause is also the name of

120 GARDEN CULTURE OF THE OROKAIVA

273 a yam. Now yams are best roasted ; if boiled, they must be boiled with care, or they resolve themselves into a watery mash. The Orokaiva like their taro in firm lumps, and perhaps they would be ill disposed towards a new kind of food whose consistency was so little to their taste.

244 On the whole we may reasonably associate the taro with the Orokaiva, and the yam with the mountain peoples on the south and south-west ; the commonness of yams among the southern Orokaiva tribes is no doubt due to a gradual infiltration. Communication between the plainsmen and the mountaineers seems to have been principally in this quarter, viz. with the Biagi, and to some extent the Managalasi. It is not improbable that the sweet potato (*Keroia*) has come from the same source : although grown quite extensively now over the whole Division, it is not held in very high favour, and, like the yam, is likely to remain wholly subordinate to the taro.

249
177 There can be no doubt that several other products have found their way into the Orokaiva plains through this avenue, and that they were established before the advance of the white man into the Division. The principal among them is native tobacco. This is widely distributed among the Orokaiva, though nowhere grown in great quantity. It has evidently preceded the coming of the European by only a generation or two at the most (for the names of agents in its disposal are well remembered), and all informants have been in agreement as to the route it has taken, viz. from the non-Binandele-speaking Isurava or Biagi people in the neighbourhood of Kokoda, down to Oivi and Papangi ; thence to the Kumusi and (within living memory) to the Aiga people of the middle Opi ; and thence again to the true Binandele of the Mambare and the lower Kumusi.

249 Tobacco, as an unfamiliar product, is known by a variety of names, such as *Hajojo* and *Tonaki*, from the resemblance of its leaf to those of the *Hajojo* and *Tonaki* trees ; *Soka*, a word of doubtful meaning ; and *Kuku*, said to be a pre-white-man expression in the north. The

GARDEN PRODUCTS

121

249 commonest names, however, are *Orokaiva* or *Kaiva*. I will not enter into the dispute as to the original meaning of the mysterious word *Orokaiva*, but if you pluck a tobacco leaf in a village and ask what it is called, three times out of four you will get the answer '*Orokaiva*'.

243 Associated with native tobacco is another plant of late introduction, viz. maize or 'corn'. Informants will insist that maize was known, at least in some parts of the plains, before the coming of the white man; and they lay down the same course as that of tobacco for its progress northwards. Nowadays the usual name for maize is *Koni*, a native rendering of 'corn'; but there are at least three other names which are said by some to be earlier than *Koni*; they are *Komobani* and *Tambara* (neither of which I can explain), and the picturesque compound *Kuku-ta-pije*, literally, 'tobacco-banana', which implies a likeness between corn-cob and banana and perhaps a simultaneous introduction of corn and tobacco. As it appears certain that corn was introduced to this country by the white man, we have another instance in which the introduction has outstripped the introducer.

244 Lastly, it was claimed by some that the papaw and the
177 pumpkin had come down from the hill people in the same way. Both these are European introductions, and if the claim be a true one, then we have a somewhat remarkable proof of the rapidity with which an introduced product may spread by contact—provided always that, like corn, it is a welcome addition to the native's *menu*. Of the more important products sugar-cane, sago, and some varieties of plantain are probably indigenous in the true sense of the word. The better kind of areca palm is said to be introduced, but there are wild varieties in the bush. The coco-nut, most domesticated of trees, seems to follow in the train of the human wanderer, thriving and rejoicing, as they say, in the sound of his voice.

773 The legend has it that the coco-nut was first a girl.

* This at any rate among Wasida, Aiga, and Binandele people.

* Cf. *Papua*, J. H. P. Murray, p. 103.

122 GARDEN CULTURE OF THE OROKAIVA

773 As the palm has a strong sheath about its young flower-cluster, which is hard and needle-pointed, and a danger to the unwary climber, so this girl had sharply pointed breasts, which were the death of all who tried to embrace her. One after another her lovers fell victim until her father grew suspicious and angry. When he had recommended a favoured young suitor to sleep with his daughter, and found in the morning that he was as dead as the others, he felt his suspicions were confirmed. So he took the coco-nut girl into the bush to help him dig a pit for a pig-trap. First he dug away himself until the hole was of a good depth, then feigning to be tired he told her to take his place while he rested. No sooner was the girl bending to her work in the pit than he dropped a heavy stone on her back, heaped in the earth, and left her buried.

Some while after this the father returned rather sadly to see the spot where he had left his child, and found there a strange tree, to wit the coco-nut. The tree was fully grown and some of the nuts had fallen. These he took home and set on his verandah rather as curiosities than for any use he could make of them. But in his absence his inquisitive little son succeeded in breaking one and was found eating greedily, with inarticulate expressions 'Oo, oo!' which his father could not understand, but which were merely indicative of the child's delight. At first the man was horrified, thinking his son must be poisoning himself; but then he reflected, 'He is a poor little brat, anyway, covered with sores; we will let him be and see how it turns out'. But next day, instead of dying as the father had anticipated, the little boy was clamorous for more, crying, 'Oo, oo!' again, and, not only that, but showed signs of a remarkable overnight growth. After such a satisfactory result, the paternal experimenter felt justified in sampling the strange fruit himself, and in this manner the virtues of the coco-nut became generally known. No better name could be given it than the 'oo' of the little boy, or the

GARDEN PRODUCTS

123

'boo' which another little boy said in another version 173 ●
of the story.¹

Regarding the betel palm there is an old story of a liaison with a village woman. Nightly the betel palm bends down over her house to visit her, and every morning, when the birds are waking, bends slowly back to stand once more as a silent palm, but leaving around the house a litter of small flowers. Every morning the wife is seen sweeping these aside, till at last suspicions are aroused: the little boy hides behind a tree to spy; the betel palm is discovered in his intrigue and chopped down by the jealous husband. Collapsing he cries, 'Now I am no longer a man but a mere betel palm: take these nuts and eat them,' and he scatters bunches for all the tribes of the north.

The betel pepper grows wild in the bush, and there is a plausible though no doubt imaginative tale of how its properties were discovered. Formerly the areca or betel-nut was chewed with lime alone, and the chewer had not the pleasant hot flavour of a condiment nor the highly becoming colour of red in his mouth. But once a solitary hunter speared a pig, and sat down on the scene of his exploit to refresh himself with lime and betel. Then he looked about him for the wherewithal to bind the pig to a pole. With the usual extempore resource, he dragged down a liana from a near-by tree, and worrying and biting it through with his teeth, by way of the handiest implements he had, discovered as he thought that his mouth was full of blood. But he soon reassured himself, and understood that the redness was due to nothing more than the mordant, peppery juice of the creeper, which had mixed with his mouthful of lime and betel. After this follows the happy scene in which he acquaints his people with the discovery, and the general inauguration of a very ugly habit. 276

There are other tales of other products, more interest- 241
177

¹ 'Coco-nut', in Waiata dialect, *s*; Aiga, *hw*; *Piandele muteri*. *Mutari* = *mu-tari*, i.e. 'to say "mu"'. 241

140 GARDEN CULTURE OF THE OROKAIVA

538 that she had cut her thumb off. At that she said, 'Now I am a cuscus,' and ever since the animal has been remarkable for the queer little member which so resembles a truncated human thumb.

244 Sometimes dying leaves are snipped off the growing
794 plant. In a ceremony of the new 'Taro cult' a band of
789 excited men were pushing their way through the taro gardens, headed by one or two leaders who continually sprayed the plants with medicine from their mouths, and here and there as they passed snapped off large leaves. The reason for this, as the leaders themselves explained the matter, was that, as with a fully grown taro the outer leaves fall, it would expedite this development to anticipate it, and make the leaves fall now.

244 I do not know of any other kind of trimming or pruning, save sometimes in the interests of tidiness. On the whole garden plants, large and small, are left very much to themselves. Some exception, however, is made in the [249] case of sugar-cane, the long stalks being bound together and supported by poles, lest they fall and so become a prey to rot and rat.

241 There seem, however, to be few recognized pests in the ordinary sense of the word; the principal enemies
136 of the native horticulturist are not microbes but animals, bats, and birds. He must be constantly on guard against the bush-pig and minor foes—the flying fox, the rat, the wallaby, and the cockatoo, not to mention his fellow man. Formerly, in a kind of native Paradise where work was at a minimum, the bush-pig was content with bush food—roots and herbs and such-like. But exchanging confidences with the rat, he learnt that the latter's food was taro and succulent sugar-cane. After that he invaded the gardens, and it has been necessary ever since to build a fence.

417 The garden fence should properly surround the whole
241 group of clan gardens. It is built, in sections, each man being responsible for the part nearest his own garden. But the work is rather laborious, and the gardens are

OROKAIVA MAGIC

789 lost: the specific retains its power, but none can tell how. If any one is able to offer an explanation it is probably, as so often with natives, merely some extempore flash of imagination, which may be wholly different from the original explanation and wholly different from what another bright native might suggest.

789 An incident will show how easily such a change from
 773 symbol to specific (whether we call it degeneration or
 811 sublimation) might come about. On the upper Gira is a large mass of rocks scored with curious grooves. These grooves are ascribed to the man-monster Totoima, who used to sharpen his teeth on the rocks as a man sharpens his axe on a stone. Totoima was famous as a hunter of men, and accordingly any medicine obtained from the neighbourhood of one of his many teeth-sharpening places will be recommended, by association with the hunter, as a medicine for dogs: it will improve their pig-hunting. This association was made explicit by more than one informant. Now there grows
 789 along the upper margin of these rocks a rare profusion of
 811 ground-orchids, among them one with a dark purple flower and (what is the significant attribute) a pale-coloured and peculiarly furry leaf. This orchid was the secret of an old man of the district who was conducting us over the historic ground. When I collected a handful of flowers which happened to show his particular variety too prominently on the outside, the old man shook his head in protest and requested me to rearrange the bouquet and make his dog-medicine rather less conspicuous. But he went so far as to confide the secret to my interpreter and factotum, one Ihipa. One should crush the leaves and make an infusion; wash the young dog and pull its limbs to make it grow quickly. He pointed to those minute white hairs with which the leaf is covered. Did they not call to mind the coat of a dog? This feature, combined with the locality association, was sufficient to make that little orchid leaf a strong dog-medicine.

Having become acquainted with the secret of the plant